

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The claims in this listing replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

### Listing of Claims:

1 - 17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A method for marking a material, wherein said material is an alcoholic beverage or a perfume, the method comprising:

identifying at least one non-isotopic ion selected from ions contained in standard seawater in said material present at an initial concentration level of below 50 ppm, said at least one ion being non-toxic with respect to human or animal use; and

incorporating a marking composition comprising said at least one ion that is non-toxic with respect to human or animal use into the material to form a marked material including said at least one ion in the marked material at an increased concentration by at least a factor of 3 as compared to the initial concentration level.

19 - 20. (Canceled)

21. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 18, wherein the concentration level of said at least one ion in the marked material is increased by at least a factor of 5, as compared to the initial concentration level of the at least one ion.

22. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 18, wherein the concentration level of said at least one ion in the marked material is increased by at least a factor of 8, as

compared to the initial concentration level of the at least one ion.

23. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 18, wherein said marking composition comprises at least one salt of inorganic salts and organic salts.

24. (Canceled)

25. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 18, wherein said at least one ion is at least one inorganic anion.

26. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 18, wherein said at least one ion  $[[is]]$  is at least one anion selected from fluoride, chloride, bromide, iodide, borate, carbonate, nitrate, phosphate, sulfate, or selenate.

27. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 18, wherein said at least one ion is at least one inorganic cation.

28. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 18, wherein said at least one ion is at least one cation selected from ammonium(+), lithium(+), sodium(+), potassium(+), rubidium(+), cesium(+), magnesium(2+), calcium(2+), strontium(2+), barium(2+), iron (2+/3+), cobalt(2+), nickel(2+), copper(2+), and zinc(2+).

29. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 18, wherein the identifying comprises determining the initial concentration level of said at least one ion.

30. (Previously Presented) A method for marking and identifying the authenticity of material, wherein said material is an alcoholic beverage or a perfume, the method comprising:

a) marking a material according to the method of claim 18 to obtain the marked material including an altered concentration level of said at least one ion, the altered concentration level of

said at least one ion being defined as at least one reference value;

b) measuring in said marked material at least one individual concentration of the said at least one ion by means of a sensor; and

c) comparing said measured at least one individual concentration with the at least one reference value and indicating the result of the comparison.

31. (Canceled)

32. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 30, wherein, prior to a), the concentration level of the at least one ion in the unmarked material is determined.

33. (Canceled)

34. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein said measuring includes determining the at least one individual concentration with an electrochemical sensor in a field audit analysis.

35. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 34, wherein said method further comprises an off-the-field laboratory analysis for confirmation of the field audit analysis.

36. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 35, wherein said off-the-field laboratory analysis is performed by analytical methods selected from atomic absorption spectroscopy (AAS), ion chromatography (IC), mass spectrometry (MS), or combinations thereof.

37. (Previously Presented) A method of identifying the authenticity of a material, the material having been marked according to claim 18, the method comprising:

a) providing at least one reference concentration of said at least one ion comprised in

said marked material;

b) measuring by a sensor at least one individual concentration of said at least one ion in said marked material, the sensor being capable of measuring individual concentration values of said at least one ion; and

c) comparing said measured at least one individual concentration with said at least one reference concentration and indicating the result of the comparison.

38. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 37, wherein said sensor is an electrochemical sensor.

39. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 37, wherein said sensor is an ion-selective electrode.

40. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 39, wherein said ion-selective electrode is a multi-ion-selective electrode.

41. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 37, wherein said sensor is a ion-selective field effect transistor.

42. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 37, wherein said measuring includes determining the at least one individual concentration with an electrochemical sensor in a field audit analysis.

43. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 42, wherein said method further comprises an off-the-field laboratory analysis for confirmation of the field audit analysis.

44. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 43, wherein said off-the-field laboratory analysis is performed by analytical methods selected from atomic absorption

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spectroscopy (AAS), ion chromatography (IC), mass spectrometry (MS), or combinations thereof.

45. (Previously Presented) A marked material selected from the group consisting of alcoholic beverages and perfumes, obtained according to a method according to claim 18.

46. (Canceled)

47. (New) The method according to claim 18, wherein said at least one ion is at least one anion selected from fluoride, chloride, bromide, iodide, borate, carbonate, nitrate, phosphate, sulfate, or selenate; or at least one cation selected from ammonium(+), lithium(+), sodium(+), potassium(+), rubidium(+), cesium(+), magnesium(2+), calcium(2+), strontium(2+), barium(2+), iron (2+/3+), cobalt(2+), nickel(2+), copper(2+), and zinc(2+).

48. (New) The method according to claim 18, wherein said material is an alcoholic beverage.

49. (New) The method according to claim 18, wherein said material is a perfume.